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Dear Friends,

War in Afghanistan

I applaud the President for his commitment to increasing troop forces in Afghanistan. However, any timeline for withdraw of military forces should be based on conditions on the ground and not on the Washington political clock. On Wednesday, [I had the opportunity to question Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mike Mullen during a Foreign Affairs Committee hearing](#). I reiterated the importance of withdrawing from Afghanistan not based on an arbitrary deadline, but on the state of the Afghan people and society. We need to ensure that the people of Afghanistan know that the United States is committed to bring democracy to their nation. Abandoning our commitment only serves to embolden the Taliban and al Qaeda and undermine the overall mission.



Congressman McCaul during last week's Foreign Affairs Hearing questioning (left to right) Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mike Mullen.

State Dinner Crashers

During last Wednesday's Homeland Security Committee hearing [I asked the director of the Secret Service](#) how Tareq and Micheale Salahi were able to get passed Secret Service and into President Obama's state dinner without being placed on a guest list or going through any sort of vetting process. The Secret Service took full responsibility for not following standard procedure.

Permanent Estate Tax Relief for Families, Farmers, and Small

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Business Act

Last Thursday, I voted against and the House passed H.R. 4154. The death tax was set to expire on January 1, 2010; however, this legislation will keep the death tax at a rate of 45% and the exemption level at \$3.5 million indefinitely. I continue to support a permanent repeal of the death tax. Since it places such a large burden on small business and farmers, its elimination would have a significant and positive impact on our economy and budget. The former director of the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office has projected an estimated increase of 1.5 million small business jobs, an increase of \$1.6 trillion in small business capital, a reduction of the unemployment rate by .9 percent and expanded investment if the death tax were repealed.



Congressman McCaul with Houston Mayor Bill White at last Thursday's discussion with Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, Dean Popps, regarding the Army's decision to award the FMTV contract to Oshkosh Corporation. McCaul, White and Congressman Chet Edwards hosted the meeting, which was well attended by the Texas Congressional delegation, the Governor's office and economic development leaders from Houston, Sealy and Katy. McCaul and the bipartisan coalition continue to build their case for reversing the Army's decision and ensuring that BAE Systems continues to produce the FMTV for the U.S. military.

In The News

[Brenham Banner Press - McCaul Supports Decision to Send Troops](#)
[Cypress Times - Afghan Decision: Surge and Withdraw. Allies Confused!](#)

[Austin American-Statesman - Obama Lays Out Afghan Strategy](#)
[Associated Press - Secret Service benches 3 over gatecrashing](#)
[Time Magazine \(Blog\) - Secret Service's Sullivan Takes the Hot Seat](#)
[Washington Times - After Dinner Disaster, A Serving of Cold Crow](#)
[The Huffington Post - Secret Service Agents Who Let Salahis Into White House Have Been Placed on Leave](#)



Congressman McCaul meets with members of the Harris County Department of Education. Pictured are teachers: Jim Henley, John Sawyer, Debra Kerner, Linda Pitre, and Pat Strong.

With Warmest Regards,

Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

This is an unattended mailbox, if you have additional comments and would like to contact Congressman McCaul, [please email me here](#).

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